

# Indiana House of Representatives

## News and Information

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### **ROBERTSON: HARRISON COUNTY RIVERBOAT MONEY STILL AT RISK**

INDIANAPOLIS – State Rep. Paul Robertson (D-Depauw) and other lawmakers have defeated one attempt to strip Harrison County of nearly \$20 million in riverboat money, but Robertson said those dollars are still at risk of being taken away.

"In the Indiana House, Republicans and Democrats were able to turn back an effort to take all riverboat money away from those counties where the boats were located," Robertson said. "However, the Senate Republicans have launched their own plan to take \$75 million in riverboat money from Harrison County and other locations, and use that money to balance the state budget."

To date, Senate Republicans have resisted opposition from members of their own caucus and Senate Democrats to take the provision from legislation that sets up funding options for the state budget. The plan is contained in House Bill 1120, while the budget bill itself is in House Bill 1001.

"When I first heard of this plan to take riverboat money away from places like Harrison County, I met with Gov. Mitch Daniels to ask that he stop the Senate Republicans from pursuing this effort," Robertson said. "While he was sympathetic to our request, the governor also made it clear that one of his top priorities was balancing the budget, and if riverboat money was needed to achieve that goal, then he would not stand in the way of the Senate Republicans pursuing that plan."

If the Senate Republicans are able to succeed in taking Harrison County's riverboat money away, Robertson said it will have a devastating impact on area residents.

"With our share of the riverboat money, we have been able to pursue projects that would have been impossible to complete because other avenues of local funding did not exist," Robertson said. "We have been able to complete infrastructure improvements and give additional funding for our schools. Without that source of revenue on hand, local officials will be forced to look at other means to generate funding, such as raising property taxes."

"Considering that the state budget proposals before the Legislature all will force property tax increases on local units of government, these are burdens the people of Harrison County do not need," he added. "It would be disappointing to see the Legislature go back on its promise to those counties that made the commitment to have riverboats, and take the local revenue away."

"In the House, Republicans and Democrats were able to work together to defeat one plan to take the riverboat money away, and I hope we can work together to stop this Senate Republican proposal in the final weeks of this legislative session," Robertson concluded.

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